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Committees  
Economic Development, Small  
Business and Regulatory Reform VC  
Families and Human Services VC  
Government Operations  
Health Policy

# The Jacobs Report

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Friday, August 13, 2004**

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## **GRANHOLM TO UNVEIL STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM**

A proposal to provide zero interest loans to engineering and technology students will be announced by the Granholm Administration within the next few weeks.

A spokesperson said that details of the proposal, which was first announced as part of the governor's January State of the State address, are being finalized.

The loan program is aimed at keeping students with high tech knowledge in Michigan. Under the basic elements of the plan, an engineering or technology student would have no interest to repay on his or her state loans so long as he or she remained in-state following graduation.

The program is still a work in progress since the state has not yet decided on the funding source for the loans. Given Michigan's current fiscal situation, coming up with the numbers won't be easy.

Granholm spokesperson Liz Boyd said that the loan program will begin with the 2005-06 school year.

## **DEMOCRATS CALL FOR WATER PROTECTION**

Last week, Democrats announced that they are "turning up the heat," to spark public attention to Governor Jennifer Granholm's call for a Great Lakes water policy. In order to build awareness, town forums have been scheduled across the state in August and September.

Arguing that Republicans in both chambers have held up the legislation (HB 5634, SB 1087), Minority Leader Dianne Byrum (D-Onondaga) told reporters that Michigan is the only state that has failed to set up internal controls on how water is diverted from the lakes, and that as more areas in the nation get "thirstier," demand on the state's resource will increase.

But Sen. Patricia Birkholz (R-Saugatuck), chair of the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee, said that Michigan isn't languishing on its end of a water legacy policy and that more research from the Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council (PA 148, 2003) is needed before regulations are approved. The council is halfway through its allotted two years.

"Now might be the right time for Great Lakes protections," said Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods). "We have nothing to gain and quite a bit to lose through inaction."

Ms Byrum believes that because Michigan residents feel so passionately about their water, town hall forums are the way to go.

Rep. Chris Kolb (D-Ann Arbor), who sponsored HB 5634, said water protection shouldn't be a partisan issue and that the Legislature has an obligation to regulate water diversion from the Great Lakes. Rep. Jack Minore (D-Flint) said Wisconsin and southern Ohio already have applied to take water out of the lakes without replacing it, putting added pressure on Michigan to get a solid policy in place.

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Legislators, officials from the Department of Environmental Quality, the Michigan League of Conservation Voters, and even Governor Granholm are scheduled to make stops at eight locations throughout the state beginning August 17 and running through September 14.

The town hall forum schedule is as follows:

7 p.m., August 17, City Council Chambers, 31555 West Eleven Mile, Farmington Hills

7:30 p.m., August 18, Warren Recreation Center, 5460 Arden Road, Warren

7 p.m., August 25, Pittsfield Township Hall, 6201 W. Michigan Avenue, Ann Arbor

7-9 p.m., August 31, Norton Shores Library, 705 Seminole, Norton Shores

7-9 p.m., September 1, Community Center, 150 South Leroy, Fenton

7-8:30 p.m., September 2, Brownstown Recreational Building, 21311 Telegraph Road, Brownstone

7-9 p.m., September 7, Monroe County Court House, 125 East Second Street, Monroe

Sept. 14, Shiawassee County, location and time to be announced

**MICHIGAN DOVE HUNTING ON HORIZON**

This week, the Natural Resources Commission approved a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recommendation outlining regulations for hunting mourning doves on a limited basis beginning Sept. 10.

The proposal, which would allow hunting of the birds in Berrien, Branch, Cass, Hillsdale, Lenawee and St. Joseph counties until Oct. 30 is subject to change during a comment period prior to the Commission's expected final approval at its Sept. 9 meeting.

The department recommendations also provide for 60-day hunting seasons from Sept. 1 through Oct. 30 in 2005 and 2006 with a 15 dove-per-day limit and a possession limit of 30 birds. Hunters would have to purchase a \$2 dove stamp with the proceeds going to wildlife funds.

The NRC action follows by one day the Board of State Canvassers' approval of petition language which allows anti-dove hunting forces to begin collecting signatures on petitions to repeal P.A. 160 of 2004 that set in motion the limited dove hunting season for three years after which time the DNR is to study the impact of the hunting on the mourning dove population.

The humane and conservation groups opposing dove hunting are hoping to collect enough signatures to place the issue on the 2006 ballot.

**CANVASSERS SET GAMING, MARRIAGE AMENDMENT DEADLINE**

This week, the Board of State Canvassers approved language on petition for the 2006 election to return a ban on mourning dove hunting and set deadlines for challenges to the petition signatures collected by groups supporting the anti-gaming and anti-gay ballot initiatives.

August 18 will be the last day to contest petitions submitted to the state in regard to the initiative calling for strict limits on gaming in the state. So far, no one has come forward with a challenge.

Coalition for a Fair Michigan, a group opposed to the constitutional amendment banning gay marriage and domestic partner benefits, has challenged the 482,590 petition signatures collected to put the issue on the November ballot. More than 317,000 signatures need to be valid for the initiative to go on the ballot.

After listening to a request by the group for an extension to August 23, Democratic Canvasser Doyle O'Connor said it would be wise to give the group more review time since the issue deals with amending the state's constitution.

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Election officials said the group have had since July 12 to start reviewing some signatures and were given a full “sampling” of 580 names last Monday. Petition challenges have to show that 200 of the sampling signatures are bogus for a full challenge to be considered by the state.

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/>.

**State Senator Gilda Jacobs** represents the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

**Constituents of the 14<sup>th</sup> District may contact Senator Jacobs at [sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov) or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.**

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